The Road to Kindergarten

The Office of Early Childhood Programs

Howard County Public School System

This event is brought to you by the *Howard County Transition to Kindergarten Workgroup*

- Community Action Council / Head Start
- Educational consultants
- Howard County Public Library System
- HC Office of Children & Families
- HCPSS Office of Early Childhood Programs
- HCPSS Pre-K and Kindergarten teachers
- HCPSS Early Intervention Services
- Howard County Family Child Care Association
- The Judy Center at Cradlerock
- Representatives from community-based, private child care/preschool programs

Topics

- School Readiness
- HCPSS Kindergarten Program
- Registration/Transition Information

Our workgroup believes…

All families want what is best for their children.

As a child's first teacher, parents and families play a significant role in education, beginning at birth and beyond.

Going to kindergarten is a developmental milestone.

The transition to kindergarten is not a one-time event.

Not all children have the same readiness for kindergarten.

Schools must be ready for children and families.

Kindergarten is an important step towards success in college, career, and life upon graduation from high school.

Welcome to the Class of 2036

HCPSS is here to support your family during your child's educational journey.

The following is county-level information that is relevant for all 42 elementary schools.

Once you register, you'll learn specific information about your child's school and eventually, their teacher.

What does "Ready for School" Mean?

"Ready for School" means...

Real-life experience

Early vocabulary and literacy exposure

Areas of competence and strengths

Developmentally appropriate activities

Young, curious minds

"Ready for School" means...

Real-life experience

- Take advantage of places in the area to visit!
  - *The Howard County Library, hiking trails, zoos, farmer's markets, aquarium, and more.*
- These experiences will give your child something to draw upon and relate to during lessons in kindergarten and make the learning more meaningful.
- Children have plenty of opportunity to share "background knowledge" - that is, what they already know or have experienced related to a topic.
- Sparks curiosity for new learning

"Ready for School" means...

Early vocabulary and literacy exposure

- Back and forth conversation, combined with quality words, supports brain development and helps sets the stage for readiness.
- Use authentic vocabulary related to those real-life experiences.
  - *When you visit the grocery store, explain you are buying "golden delicious apples." Discuss what golden and delicious mean. Can you think of or find other things that are golden or delicious? What other words mean the same thing?*
- Your lap is the best app! Read real books and give your child a chance to turn the pages, predict what will happen, discuss the story, etc. Point out simple words in the text. Before reading, make predictions about the story. After reading, discuss what happened. Select books and subject-matter of high interest to your child.

"Ready for School" means...

Areas of competence and strengths

- There is a developmental continuum across different domains, including Language & Literacy, Mathematics, Social Foundations, Fine and Gross Motor Skills, etc.
- Remember there will be areas of strength and areas of need or emerging skills, and those are unique to every child. Teachers use this approach to support learning and move each child forward along their own unique developmental path.
- Help your child develop additional readiness skills by supporting knowledge, skills, and behaviors that are still emerging and continuing to nurture areas of strength.

"Ready for School" means...

Developmentally appropriate activities

- Workbooks and flashcards are not needed to support readiness. Instead, capitalize on your child's interest and their everyday world.
  - Use magnetic letters to spell their name. Practice the names and sounds of the letters in their name. Spell the names of family members and friends. Find other things in the house that start with the same letter as their name.
  - Play with the sounds in words. Change the first letter to a new letter. What is the new word?
  - Count the number of steps it takes to get from the car to the front door, the front door to their room. How many rungs on the ladder at the park?
  - And more!

"Ready for School" means...

Young, curious minds

- It's ok to ask questions!
- Demonstrate asking questions about things you are curious about. Say things like, "I wonder…". Read books about the things you wonder, visit related places, practice using new words you learn, etc.

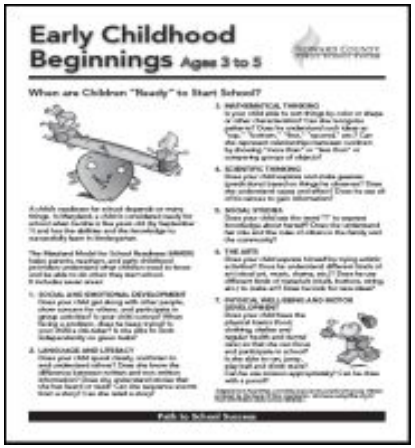
"Ready for School" means...

Children don't have to come to school knowing everything. It means they have most of the foundational skills, knowledge, and behaviors that help them access new learning.

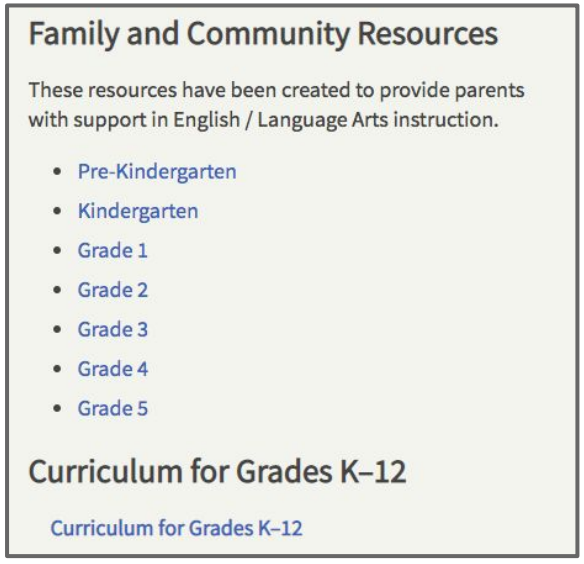
Support Readiness

Find resources and additional links on our website!

- Prekindergarten Family & Community Resources
- Kindergarten Family & Community Resources
- Early Childhood Beginnings


Early Childhood Beginnings Ages 3 to 5

When are Children "Ready" to Start School?


Family and Community Resources

These resources have been created to provide parents with support in English / Language Arts instruction.

- Pre-Kindergarten
- Kindergarten
- Grade 1
- Grade 2
- Grade 3
- Grade 4
- Grade 5

Curriculum for Grades K–12

Curriculum for Grades K–12

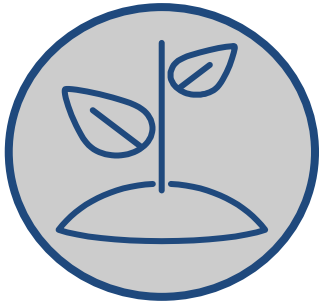
Determining Readiness

Developmentally-Appropriate Assessment Measures

- Supports targeted, differentiated instruction
- Examples include observation, brief performance tasks, etc.
- Kindergarten Readiness Assessment
- Universal Screening

HCPSS

Kindergarten Program



Our Vision

The Office of Early Childhood Programs strives to ensure that instruction at the kindergarten level:

- prepares students for success as lifelong learners by developing the academic, social and emotional knowledge, strategies, and skills needed to participate responsibly in a diverse and changing world;
- utilizes a child-centered approach to ensure that each child develops a love of learning;
- nurtures a positive school experience where all students contribute as members of the classroom community; and,
- supports an individualized approach so each student successfully acquires, demonstrates, and applies the skills and knowledge of the curriculum.

Every day in kindergarten...

- Developmentally Appropriate Practices
- Expressive Language Opportunities
- Social / Emotional / Behavioral Skill Development
- Interdisciplinary Instruction

Developmentally Appropriate Practices

- Hands-on learning
- Mix of learning preferences: auditory, kinesthetic, visual, etc.
- Manipulatives (magnetic letters, dice, counters, etc.)
- Learning occurs in age-appropriate chunks of time.

Expressive Language Opportunities

- Ability to communicate using language
  - Learning to ask for help
  - Asking questions
  - Back and forth conversation
  - Staying on topic in a conversation
  - Expressing an opinion
  - Etc.

Social Emotional Skill Development

- Skills for life
  - Turn-taking
  - Working memory
  - Ability to control attention
  - Putting off favorite activities to prioritize important tasks
  - Friendship skills
  - Problem solving
  - And more!

Interdisciplinary Instruction

- Apply subjects and learning across the day
  - Listen to a read aloud about counting in math
  - Write an alphabet book about healthy habits in health
  - Use the Engineering Design Process to create structures in block center during play time
  - Etc.

What Might a Day in Kindergarten Look Like?

SAMPLE SCHEDULE
Arrival / Morning Work
Opening / Morning Meeting or Circle
Language Arts
Science / Social Studies / Health
Recess & Lunch
Quiet Time / Take Ten
Mathematics
Related Arts
Student-Selected Activities

Arrival / Morning Work

Image Courtesy of Howard County Library System • Kindergarten Here We Come!

Arrival / Morning Work

- Children arrive by car, bus, or as a walker
- Enter with other students
- Learn to participate in arrival routines (e.g., unpack, gather materials) with independence

Opening /
Morning Meeting

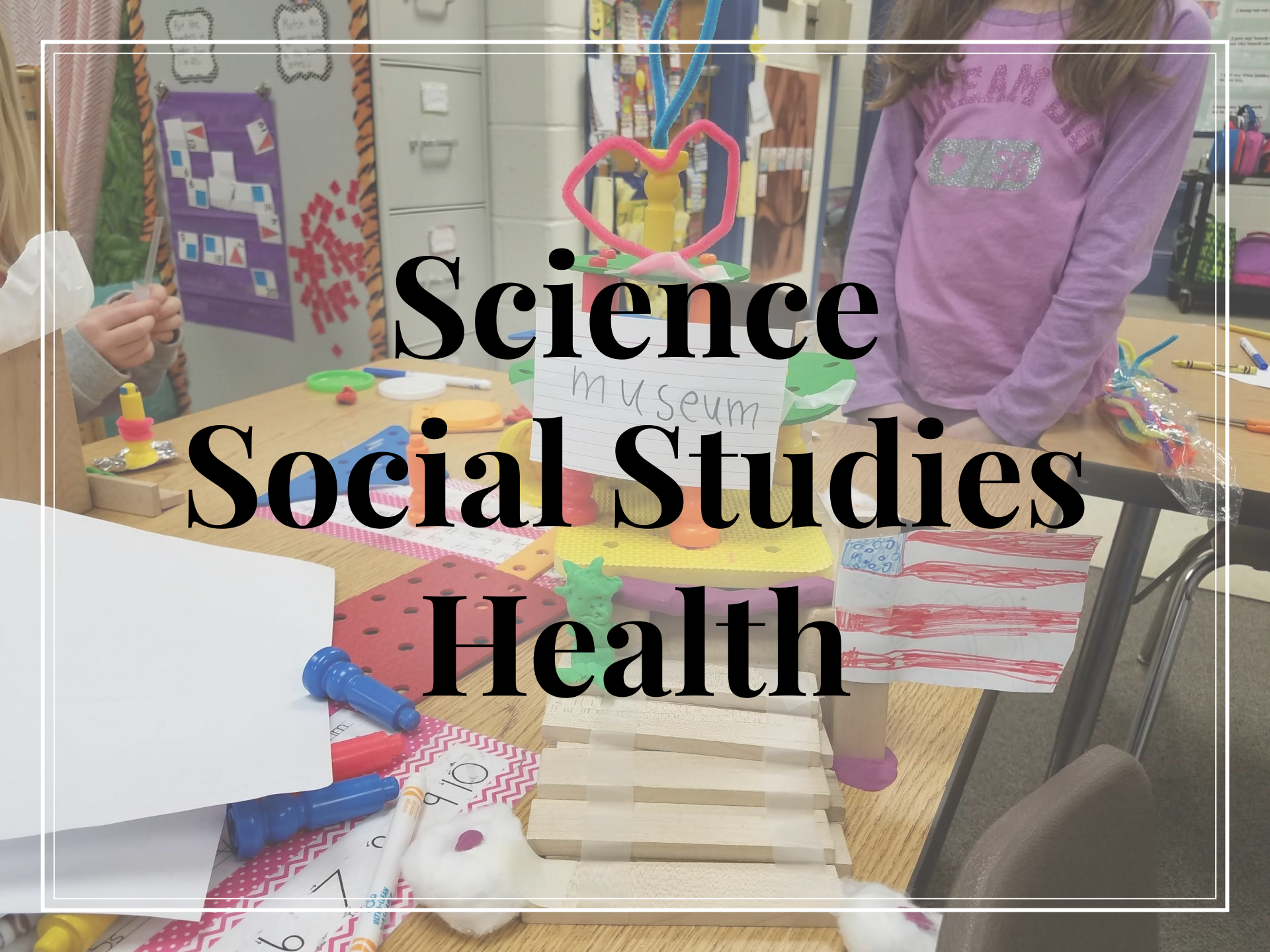
Opening / Morning Meeting

- Build classroom community
- Talk about the day to come
- Share stories, songs, updates, etc.

Language Arts

Language Arts

- Daily
- Mix of whole group (lessons with the entire class together), small group, partner, and independent opportunities
- Children work in small groups on lessons targeted to meet their individual learning needs.
- Reading, writing, foundational skills, and more!


Science
Social Studies
Health
museum

Science
Social Studies
Health

- 30-45 minutes, depending on the unit
- Four units per subject
- Specific unit of study for each subject area.
- Learn more at the Kindergarten Family & Community Resources site.

Lunch & Recess

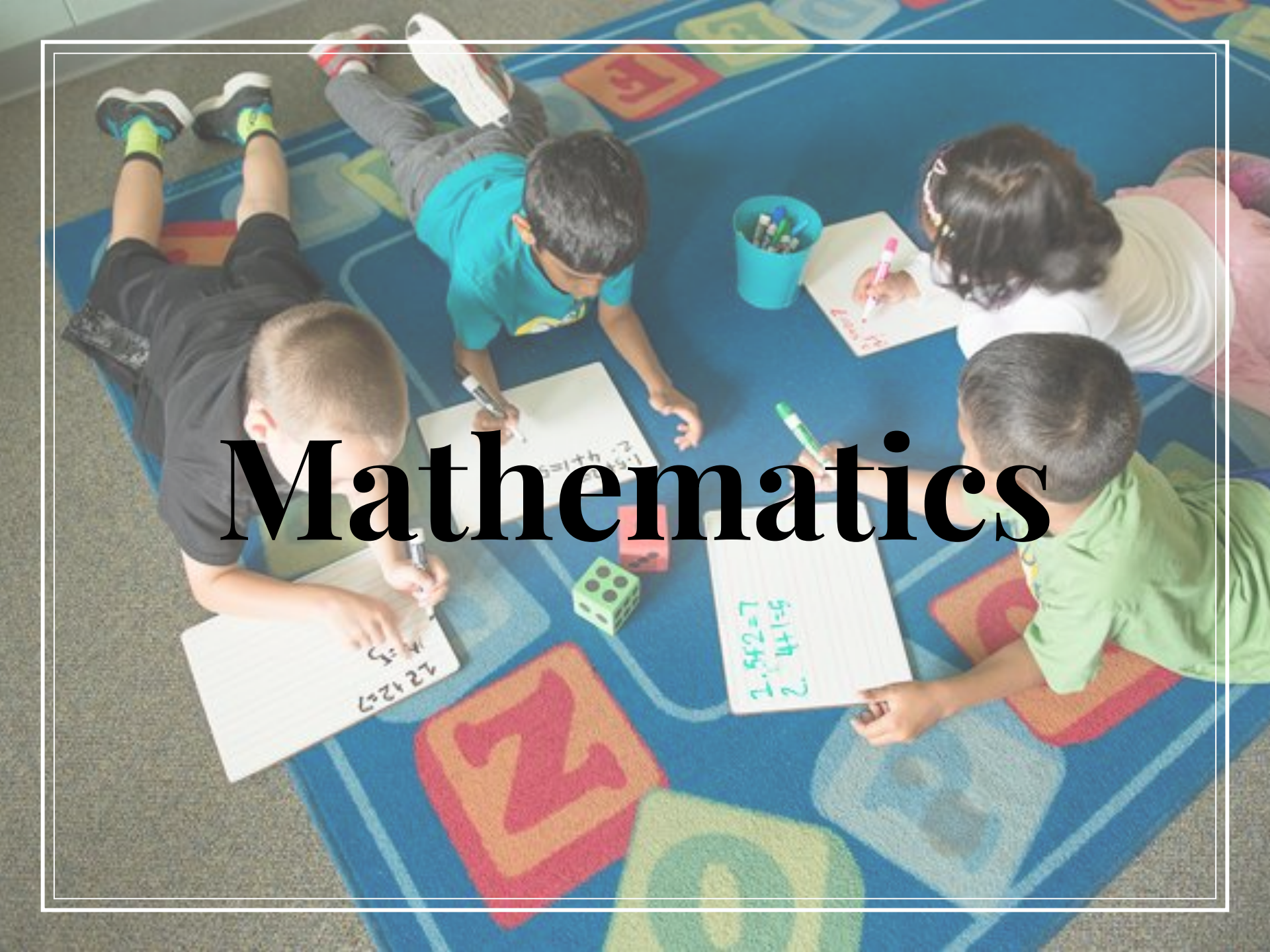
Lunch & Recess

- 30 minutes each
- Lunch available at school or bring from home
- Staff members support children with making choices, opening containers, purchasing, etc.
- Go outside for recess as much as possible, so send children to school in weather-appropriate clothing
- Practice opening containers with your child.

Quiet Time / Take Ten

Quiet Time / Take Ten

- Quiet Time is not nap, but a chance to calm after high energy moments.
  - *It is important for children to have down time and an opportunity to rest their brains.*
- Take Ten is movement, usually set to music. Includes dancing, songs, etc.


Mathematics

Mathematics

- Daily
- Whole group (lessons with the entire class together), small group, partners, and independent opportunities
- Children work in small groups on lessons targeted to meet their individual learning needs.
- Lots of games and hands-on materials like dice, dominoes, animal-shaped counters, etc.

Related Arts

- Art
- Music
- Physical Education
- Library Media
- Technology

Related Arts

- Daily
- Range from 30-60 minutes, depending on the subject
- Go to other classrooms (Art Room, Gym, etc.),
- Have different teachers for each subject

Student-Selected Activities

Student-Selected Activities

- Daily
- 30-40 minutes
- Time to play, make choices, bring learning to life
- May include blocks, painting, dramatic play, water table, science table, etc., and change throughout the year

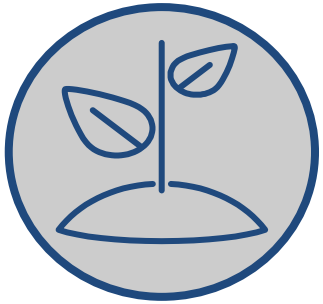
Kindergarten Instruction

=

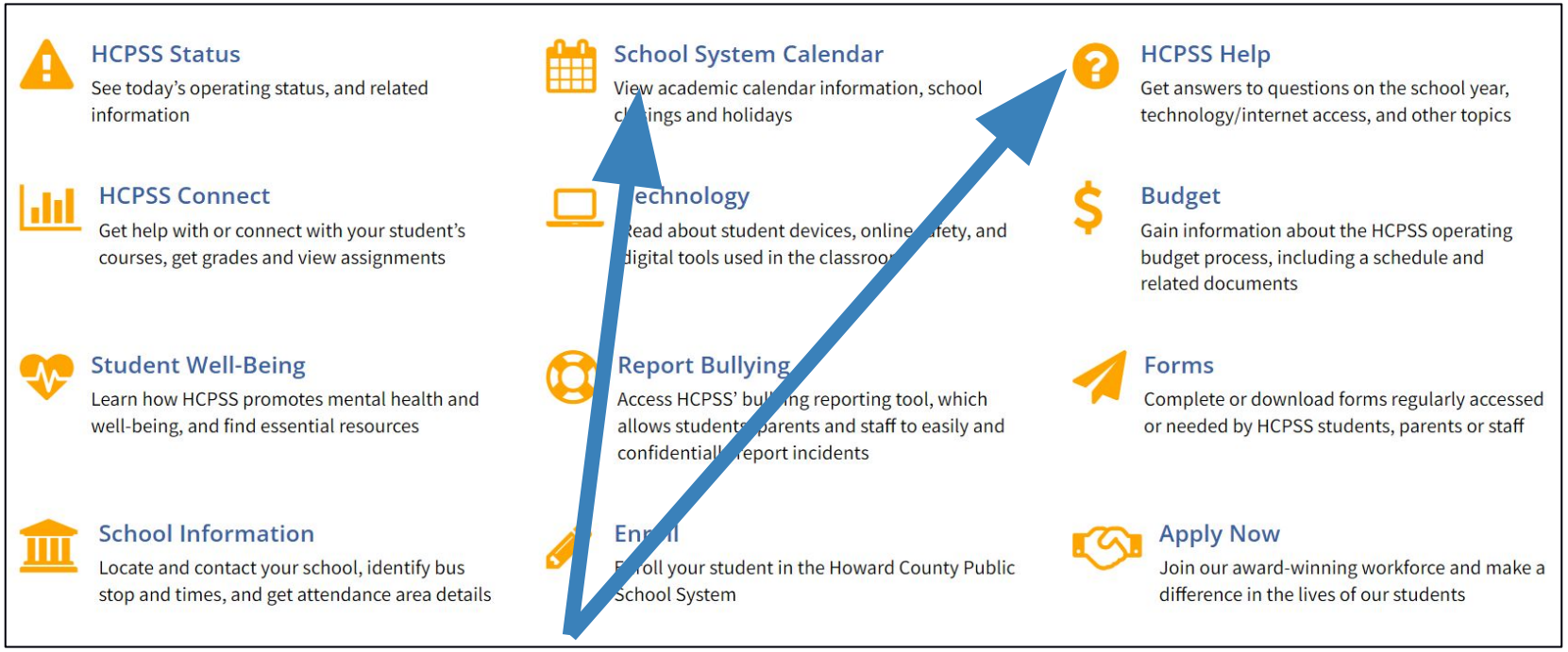
Differentiated Instruction

Designed to meet each child's academic needs in each subject, moving them forward through individualized instruction and activities.

Registration/Transition Information



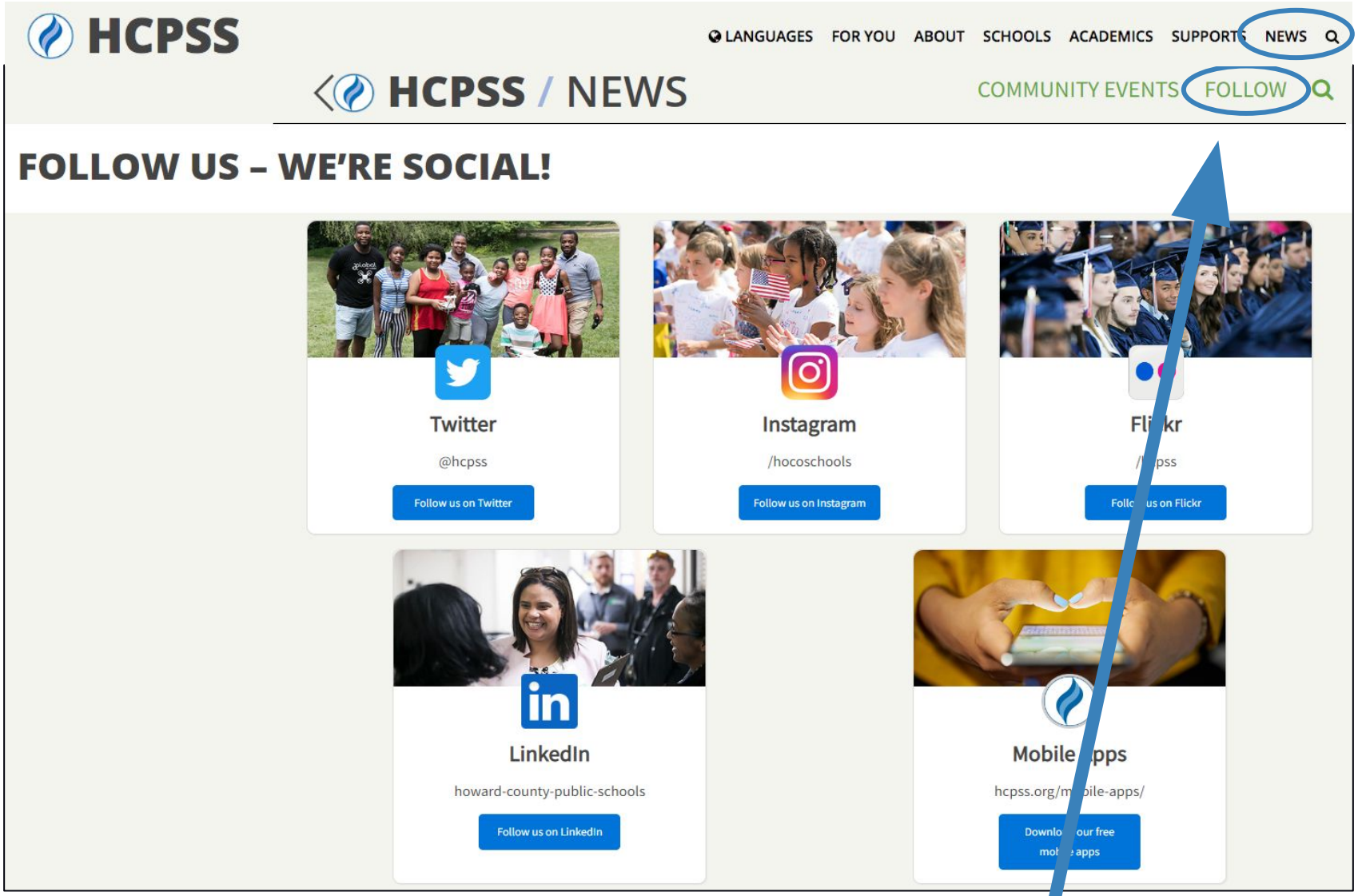
www.hcpss.org
Homepage



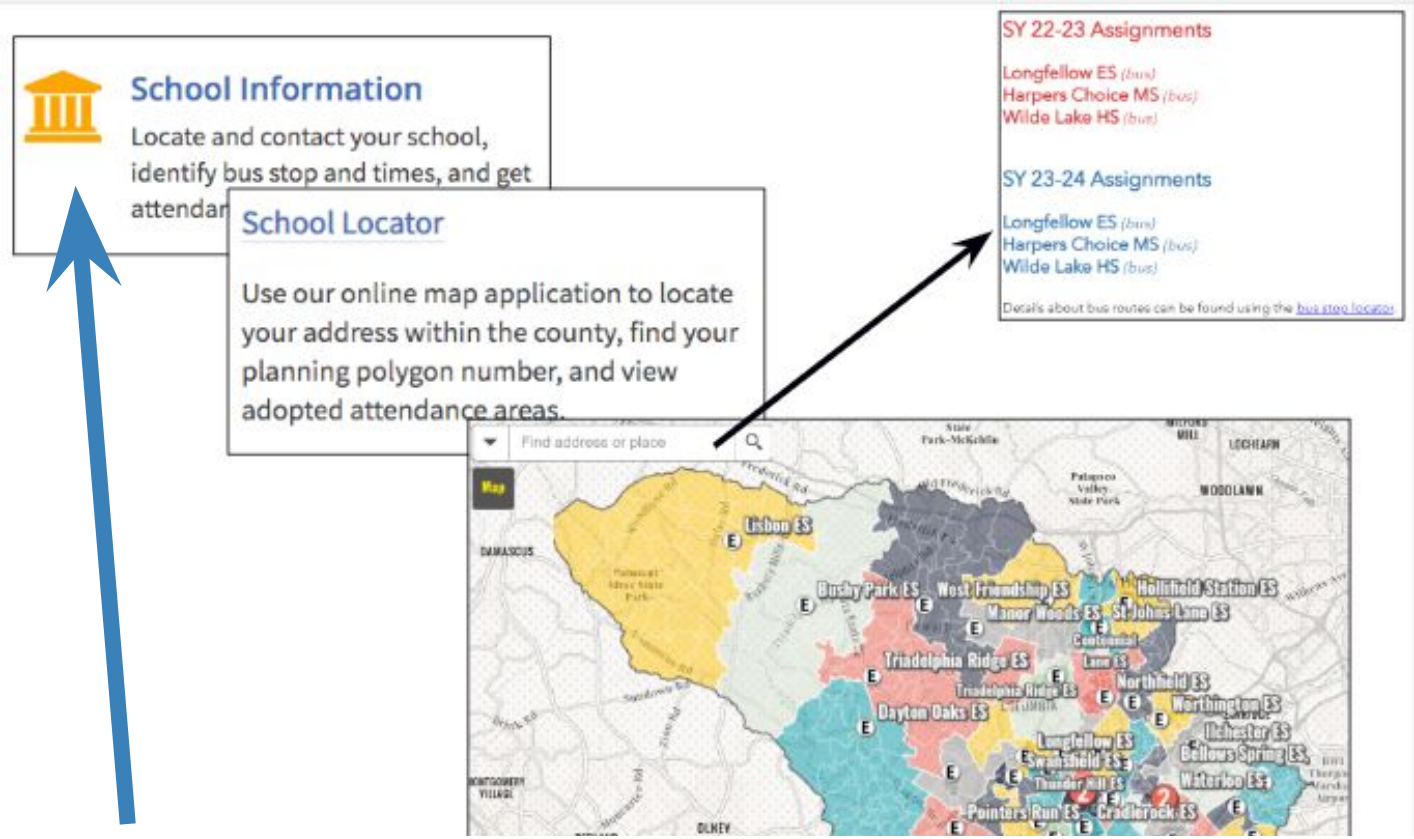
- Check out the **School System Calendar** for early dismissals, closures, etc. so you can plan ahead!
- Visit **HCPSS Help** for Frequently Asked Questions

https://www.hcpss.org/hcpss-news/

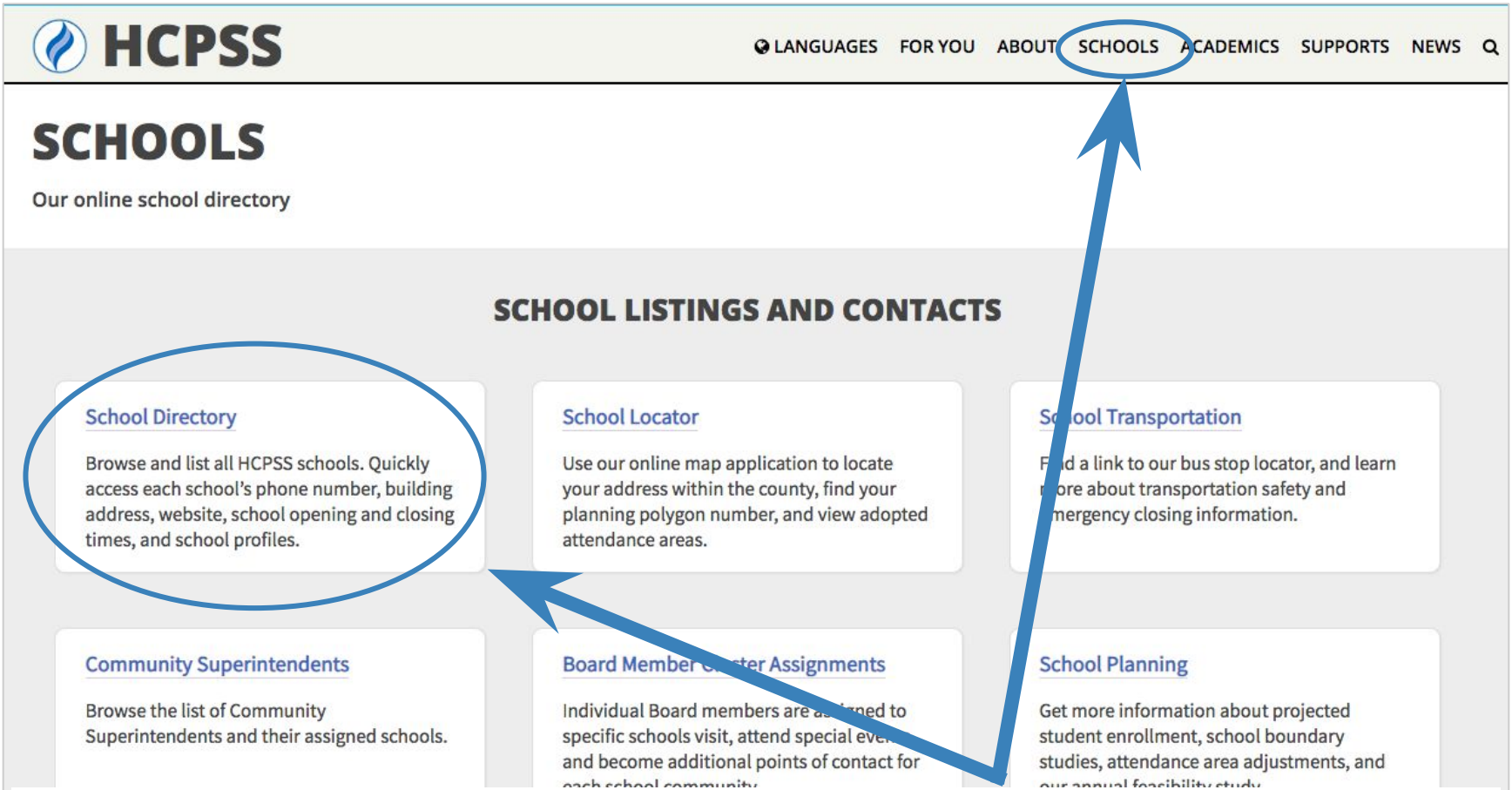
- Parents/guardians of enrolled HCPSS students DO NOT need to sign up for, or manage an HCPSS News account.
- If your oldest/only child is starting school in the fall, you will be automatically signed up for HCPSS News messages in early August from HCPSS and the school your child will be attending.
- Subscription information comes directly from the Family File information parents/guardians complete in the HCPSS Connect system.
- Community members or any non-HCPSS parent must sign up to receive email and/or text messages from the district and/or specific schools.



- Follow HCPSS on various social media platforms.



- Find your assigned school using School Information from the homepage. Look for **School Locator.**
- Children attend the school to which they are assigned.
- Bus service available if you live more than one-mile from school.



- Once you use **School Locator** to find your school, use the **School Directory** to learn more.
- Access the **School Directory** from the main page using **School Information** OR from the **Schools** option in the navigation bar.

- View school profiles, find contact information, etc.
- School times are unique to each school - this is important to know so you can arrange before and after-care, if needed.

eria.

Atholton Elementary Sch ol

410-313-6853

Web Site

6700 Seneca Drive, Columbia, M 1046

Principal – Robin Malcot

9:15 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.

View School Details

Bellows Spring Elementary School

410-313-5057

Web Site

8125 Old Stockbridge Road, Ellicott City, MD 21043

Principal – Julie Schruefer

9:25 a.m. – 3:55 p.m.

View School Details

Bollman Bridge Elementary School

410-880-5920

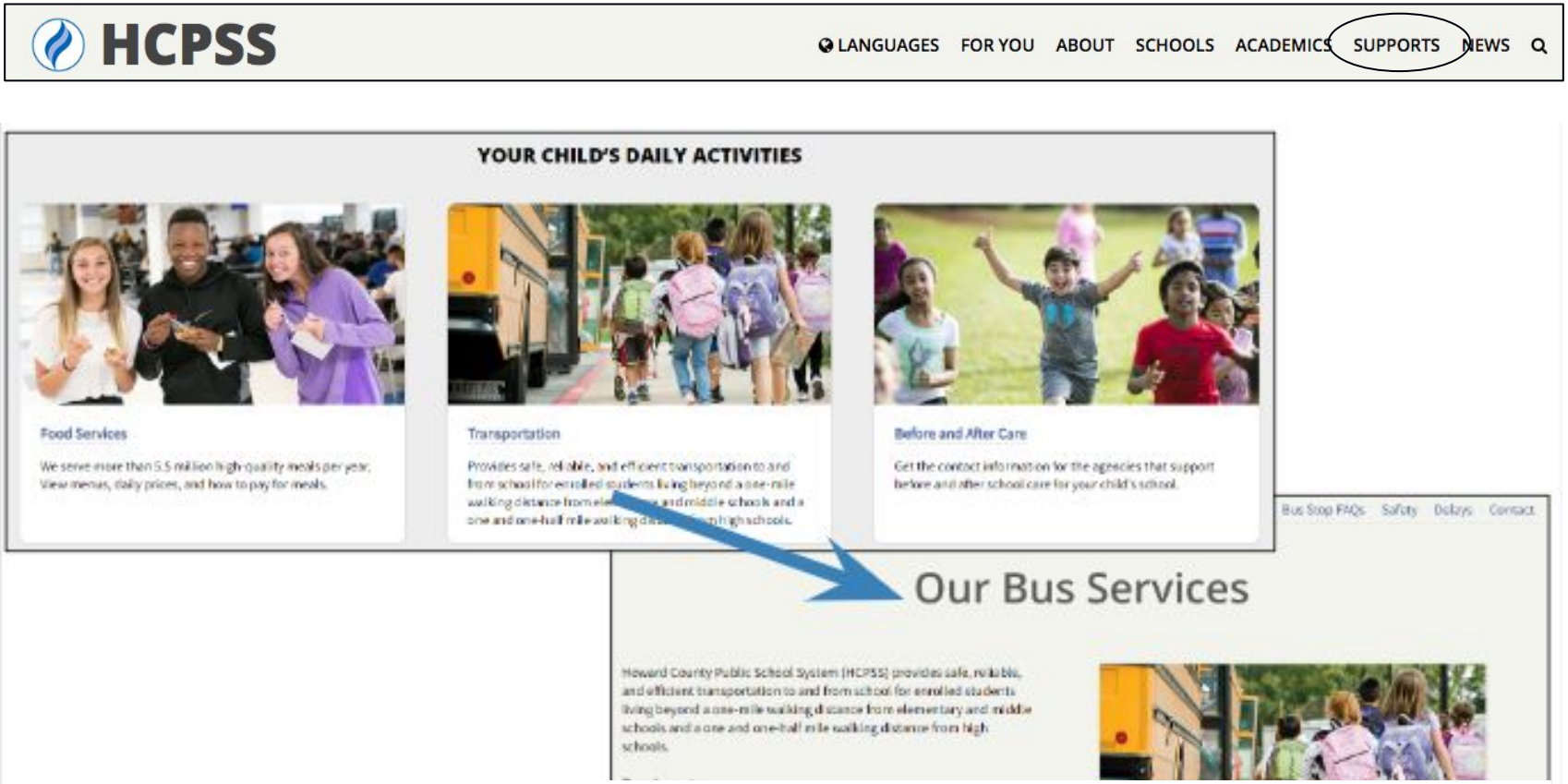
Web Site

8200 Savage-Guilford Road, Savage, MD 20763

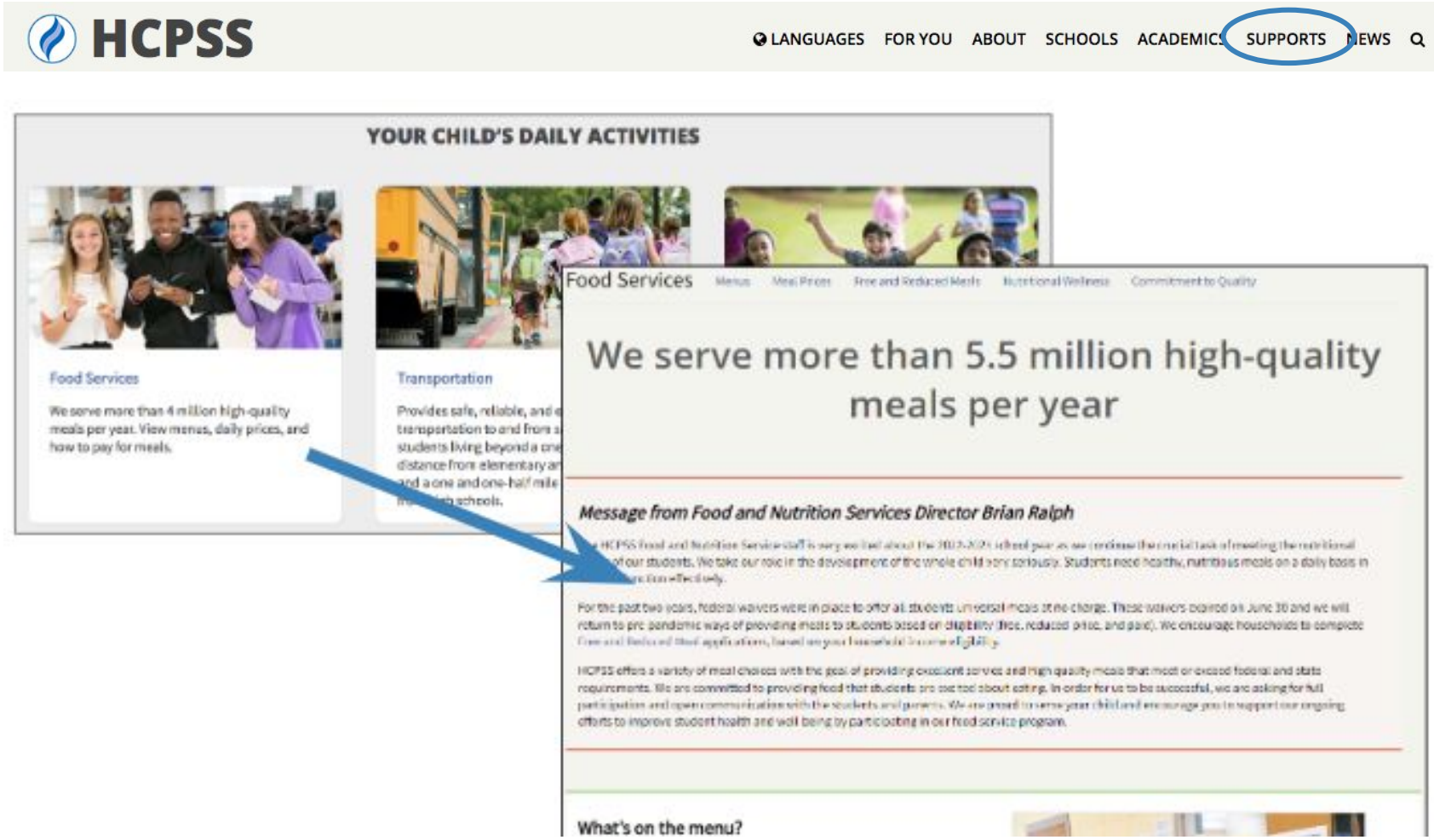
Principal – Connie Fowlkes

8:35 a.m. – 3:05 p.m.

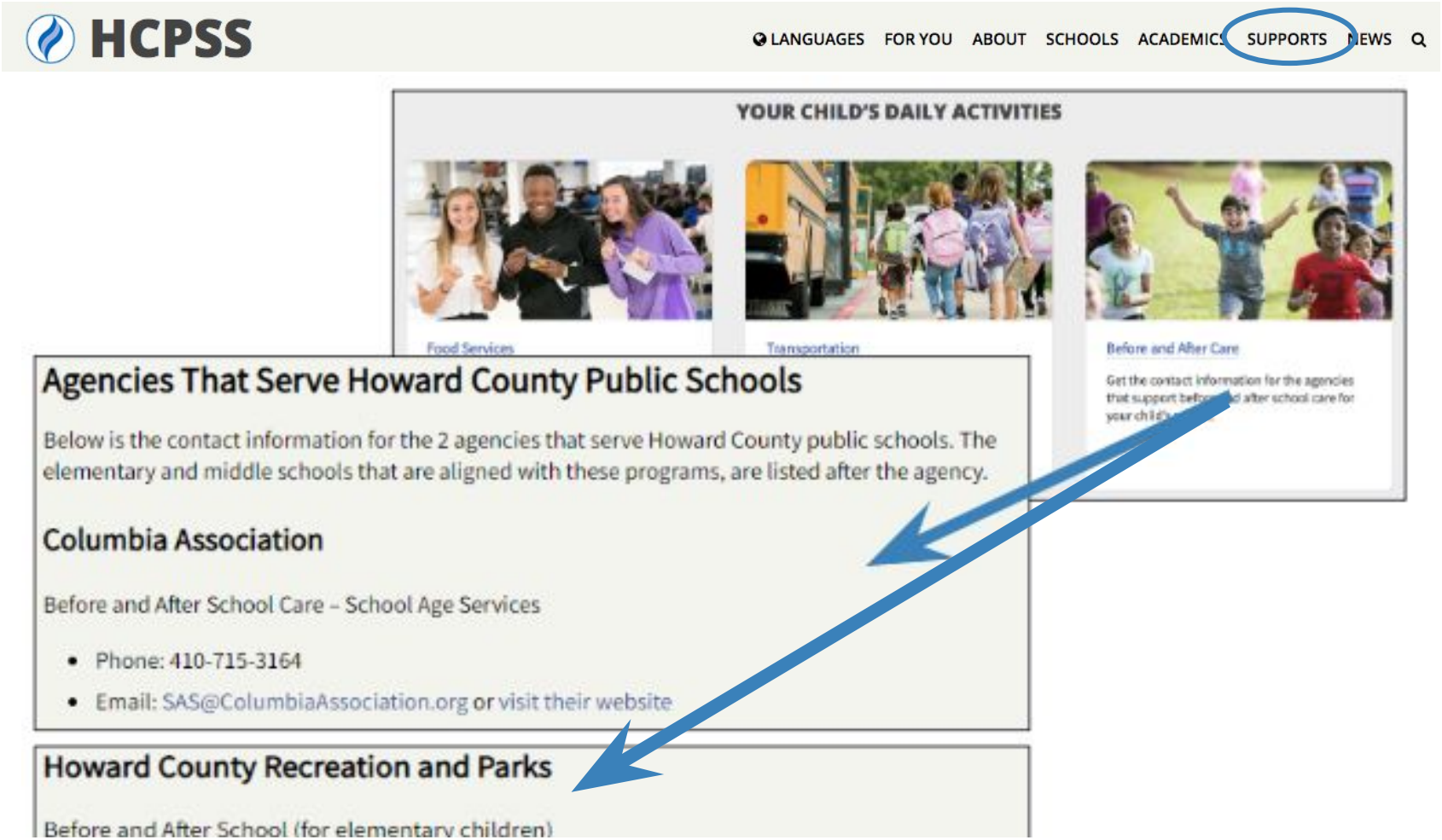
View School Details



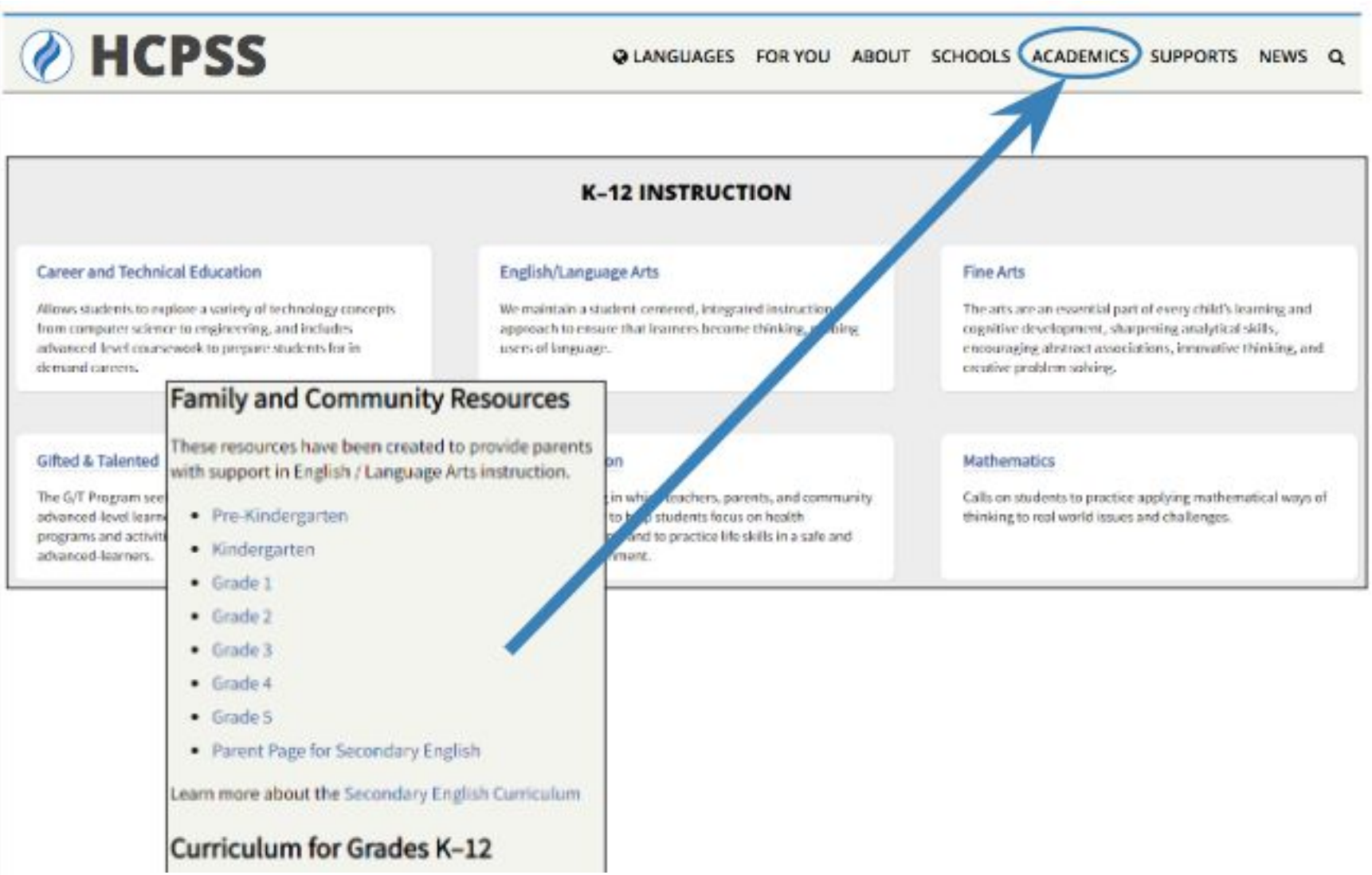
- Find out **Transportation** information via **Supports** in the navigation bar.
- On the first day, it is recommended to send your child to school the way they will travel every day. Plenty of adults will help guide them and they get to experience the "newness" - and excitement, nerves, anticipation - with their classmates while learning new routines.



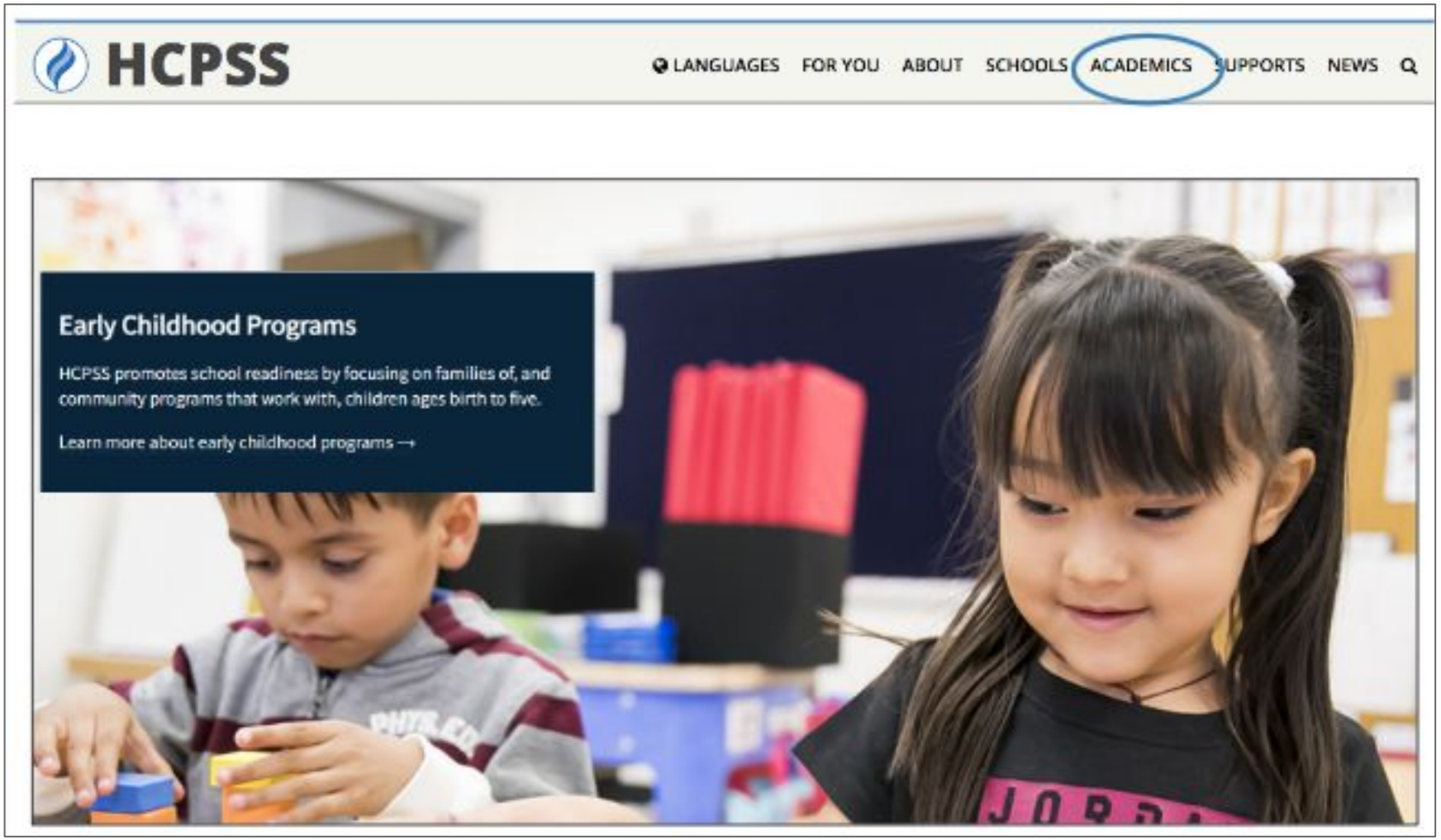
- Find **Food Services** information via **Supports** in the navigation bar.
- Information includes nutrition, allergens, pricing, online payment, etc.



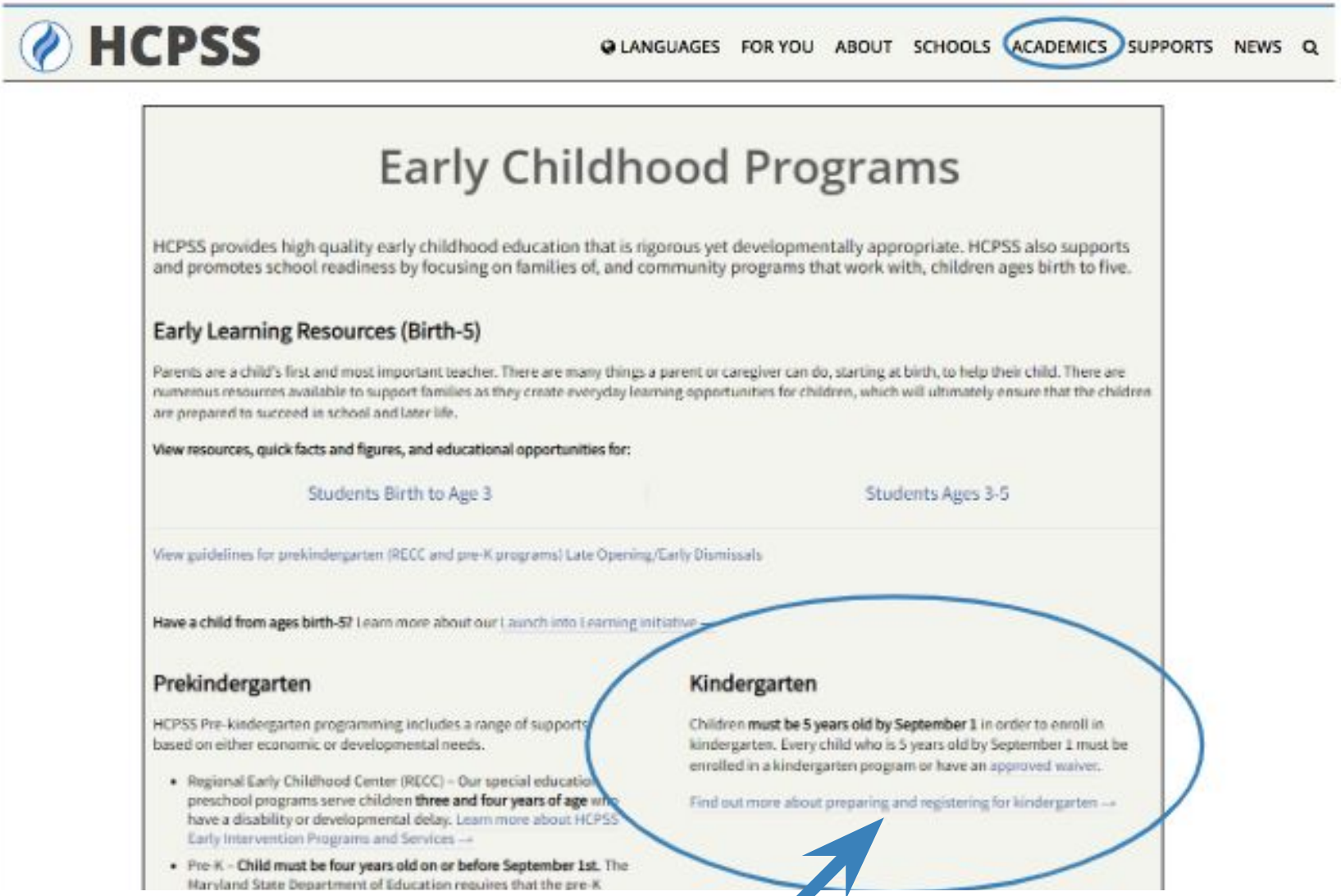
- Find **Before and After Care** information via **Supports** in the navigation bar.
- If you need before and/or after care, **sign up early** (check with agencies for specific dates) - *programs fill up quickly!*



- Find information about academics, look for resources, etc.
- What Your Child Will Learn Guides/Family and Community Resources



- Visit **Early Childhood Programs** for Birth to Five information, including kindergarten readiness and more!



- Find out more about readiness, what you can do the year before kindergarten, registration, and more.

HCPSS

LANGUAGES FOR YOU ABOUT SCHOOLS ACADEMICS SUPPORTS NEWS

Getting Ready for Kindergarten

— Back to Enrollment and Registration

Overview

HCPSS kindergarten is a full-day program. Registration for the 2023-2024 school year begins March 6, 2023. Children must be 5 years old by September 1, 2023, in order to enroll in kindergarten. Every eligible child must be enrolled in a kindergarten program this fall or have an approved waiver form, which will be available March 1, 2023.

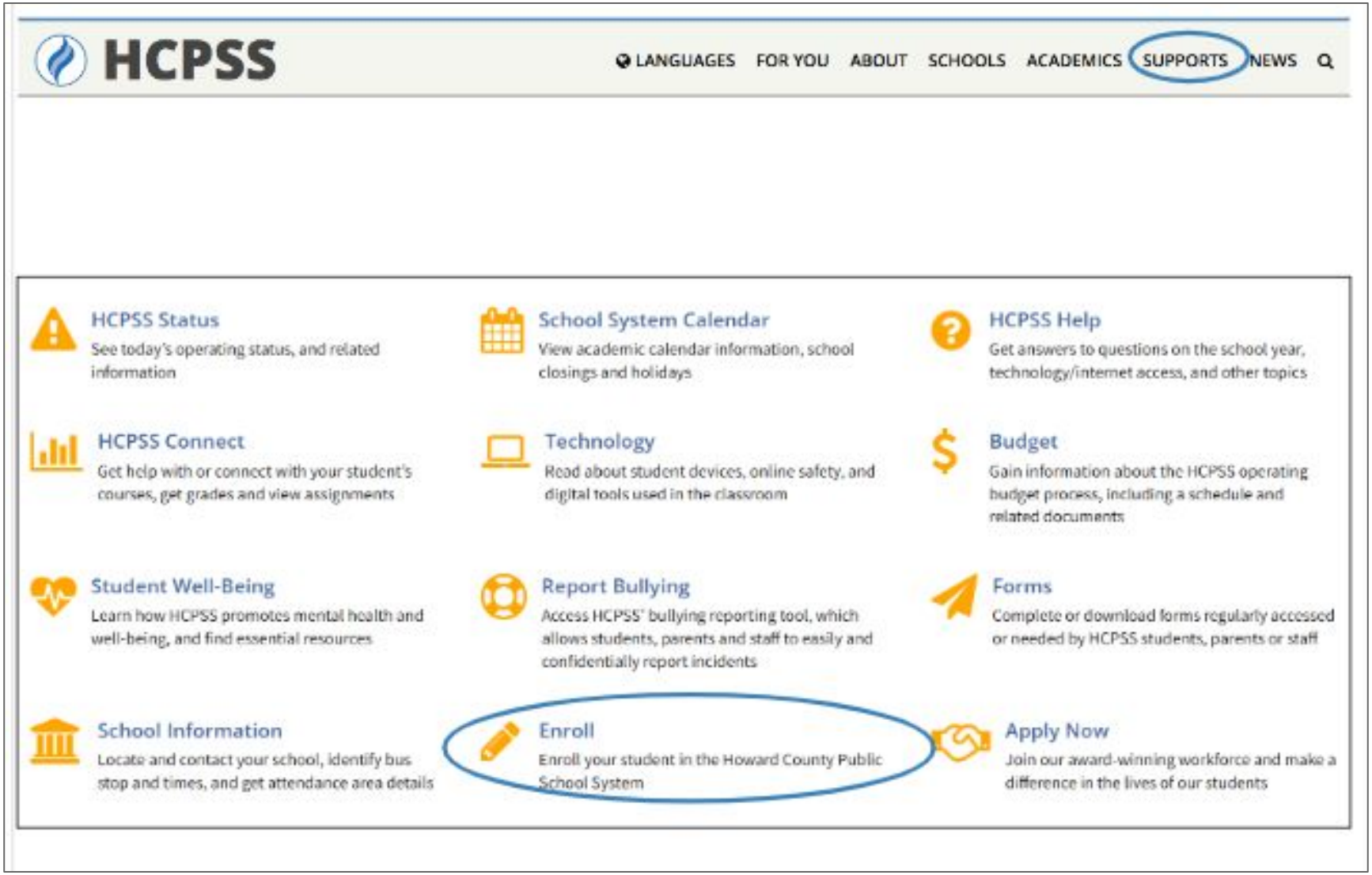
— Start the enrollment process

Helping Your Child Get Ready for Kindergarten

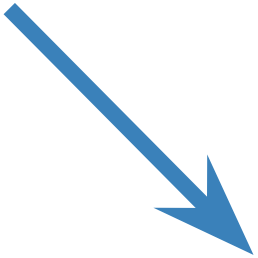
Kindergarten teachers are prepared for children entering school with varying abilities, strengths and needs. Each child is taught at their appropriate level through differentiated instruction. Learn more about what your child will learn in kindergarten.

Review the 2022 Road to Kindergarten slideshow for information about kindergarten readiness, the kindergarten program, and registering your child for school. Prior to kindergarten there are many things parents can do to support their child's transition to school. From making sure appropriate documentation is gathered, to playing with, reading with and listening to their child, the year before kindergarten is a great

- Access **Enrollment** information here or from the homepage.
- For students who are the right age but parents feel aren't ready and want to wait, there is an option for a waiver.


HCPSS
LANGUAGES
FOR YOU
ABOUT
SCHOOLS
ACADEMICS
SUPPORTS
NEWS
HCPSS Status
See today's operating status, and related information
School System Calendar
View academic calendar information, school closings and holidays
HCPSS Help
Get answers to questions on the school year, technology/internet access, and other topics
HCPSS Connect
Get help with or connect with your student's courses, get grades and view assignments
Technology
Read about student devices, online safety, and digital tools used in the classroom
Budget
Gain information about the HCPSS operating budget process, including a schedule and related documents
Student Well-Being
Learn how HCPSS promotes mental health and well-being, and find essential resources
Report Bullying
Access HCPSS' bullying reporting tool, which allows students, parents and staff to easily and confidentially report incidents
Forms
Complete or download forms regularly accessed or needed by HCPSS students, parents or staff
School Information
Locate and contact your school, identify bus stop and times, and get attendance area details
Enroll
Enroll your student in the Howard County Public School System
Apply Now
Join our award-winning workforce and make a difference in the lives of our students

- Assess eligibility and register your child for school.
- The early admission application process is designed for students born within a designated window.
- Those seeking school enrollment one year early can find application information here.



Step 1 – Assess Eligibility and Needs

New Students

Students who have never attended a HCPSS school must be registered by their custodial parent (biological, adoptive, legal guardian).

New Kindergarten Students

Children must be 5 years old by September 1 in order to enroll in kindergarten. Every child who is 5 years old by September 1 must be enrolled in a kindergarten program this fall or have an approved waiver.

More information about registering a Kindergarten student →

New Prekindergarten Students

HCPSS offers a half-day prekindergarten program. Students must be four years old by September 1 to be considered for enrollment. Unlike enrollment for K-12, parents must apply for admission to prekindergarten.

Learn more about prekindergarten program →

Seeking Early Admission?

The early admission process is designed for students who are born between September 2 – October 13 and are seeking enrollment to school one year early.

Learn more about Early Admission to see if your child qualifies →

Step 2 – Find Your School

Parents must live in the attendance area of the school where they plan to enroll their student. Use our School Locator tool to find and verify your school and attendance area.

Verify your child's school attendance area

Step 3 – Gather Documentation

Having all your documentation prepared in advance of registration will keep the process moving quickly. If you have a change of address, please notify your school and complete the Change of Address form.

Student Identification Documentation

- Student's evidence of birth (birth certificate, passport/visa, physician's certificate, baptismal or church certification, hospital certificate, parent/s affidavit or birth registration.)
- Proof of parental relationship, custody, or guardianship. If applicable, bring legal proof of custody (court order).
- Any additional paperwork that may be necessary due to special living arrangements or circumstances.

Academic Documentation

- Student's most recent grade report, transcript, report card from last school attended at time of withdrawal.
- Documentation of Special Education (IEP), 504, Psychological Report, or related services.

Parent Identification Documentation

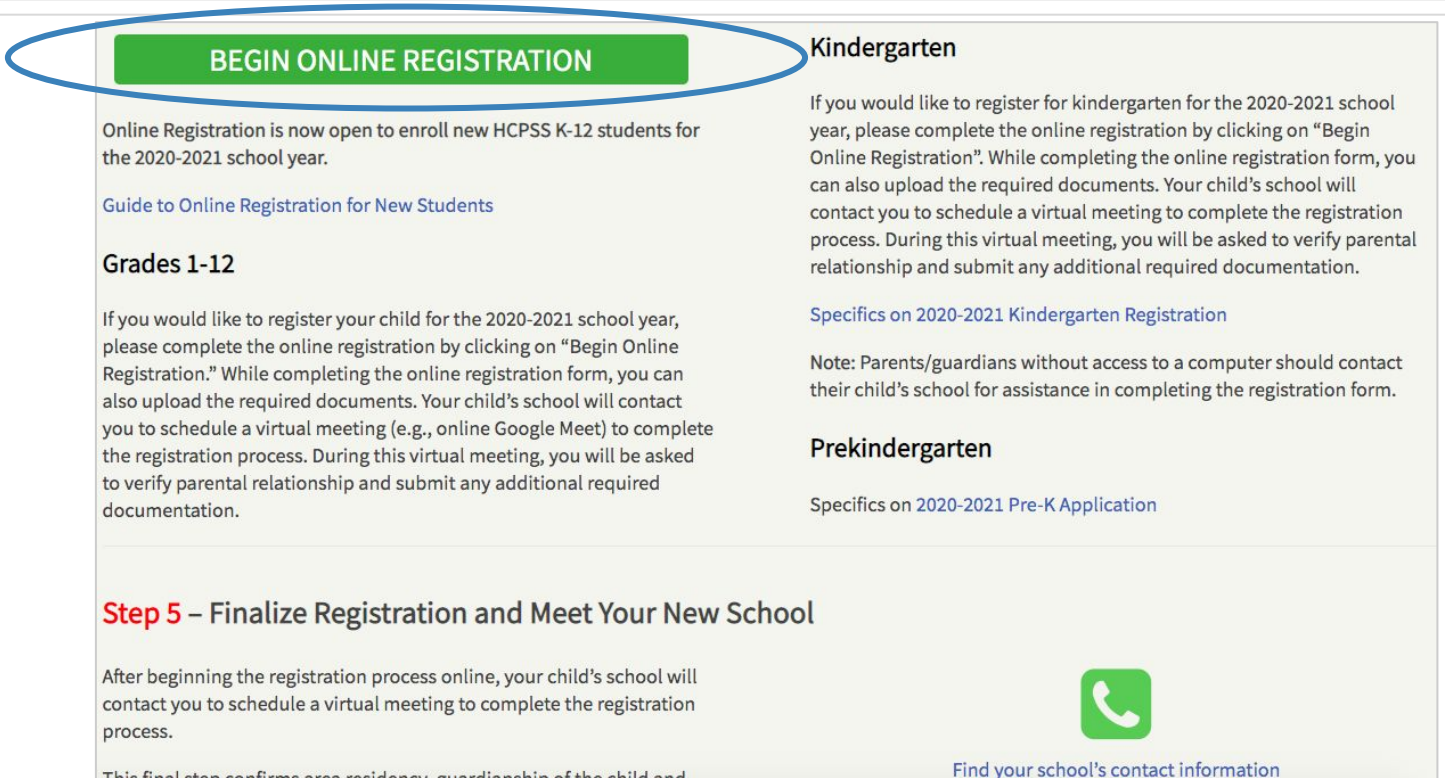
- Parent picture ID: driver's license, passport, MVA identification or other legal form of photographic identification.
- Signed original, current complete lease or complete deed with your address, valid dates, signatures.
- Current utility bill with name and address (non-cellular telephone, gas and electric, cable bill issued in the last 45 days.)

Health Documentation

- Student's current proof of immunizations, signed by physician. Learn more about the immunizations required for enrollment →

Students who have never attended a Howard County public school are required to submit additional health documents, including dental, physicals and more. Learn more and access these forms.

- Required documentation for registration is listed here.
- Specific, updated information related to health documentation (immunizations, medication, allergies, etc.) can be found at the link.



- After gathering the required documents, begin the online registration process.
  - *Parents/guardians without access to a computer should call their child's designated school for more information.*
- Finalize registration with your assigned school. This final step confirms area residency, guardianship of the child and ensures that the registration process is completed correctly.

Kindergarten Registration Begins

March 6-10, 2023

You will need:

- Picture I.D. (driver's license, passport, MVA identification or other legal form of photographic identification.)
- Signed original, current complete lease or complete deed with your address, valid dates, signatures.
- Current utility bill with name and address
- Child's evidence of birth (birth certificate, passport/visa, physician's certificate, baptismal or church certification, hospital certificate, parent/s affidavit or birth registration)
- Student's current proof of immunizations signed by physician.
- Proof of parental relationship, custody, or guardianship.

Kindergarten Registration Begins

March 6-10, 2023

- Language support is available at the Multilingual Family Registration Center.
- Children already enrolled in a HCPSS school as a prekindergarten student DO NOT need to re-enroll for kindergarten. Parents will receive information from child's current school and records will be transferred.
- If you are buying, building, or leasing a home in another attendance area than where you live, or haven't yet settled on your home, contact Student Reassignment via student_reassignment@hcpss.org .
- For any questions regarding residency, multiple family living arrangements, students experiencing homelessness, or custody/guardianship issues, please contact the Office of Pupil Personnel at 410-313-6747.

Kindergarten Registration Begins

March 6-10, 2023

- If you cannot register March 6-10, that's ok, but you are encouraged to register your child as soon as possible to receive information about upcoming kindergarten transition events, etc.

Sample of School Events for Parents and/or Children*

- Visitation / Tours
- Parent Information Session
- Spring Picnic
- Summer Playdates
- Orientation
- Back-to-School Night

**Not all events listed occur at every school. Information about events specific to your child's school will be shared when you register.*

Read Stories About School With Your Child!

Advice for Kindergarten Parents

- Become involved in your school - find ways to volunteer, join the PTA, go to school events, etc.!
- Sign up for email or text alerts!
- Get to know other parents!
- Never be afraid to ask questions!
- Know that it's *normal* to feel a wide range of emotions!
- Share your excitement and curiosity with your child…but not your anxiety!

Have a great next stop in
KINDERGARTEN!

Any Questions?

Please call the

Office of Early Childhood Programs

410-313-5693